

CITY BRIDGE TRUST – Delegated Authority (Requests up to £250k)

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY: Bridging Divides - Positive Transitions\Children & young people\Who are disabled transitioning into adulthood

Ruils

Ref: 17433

Amount requested: £141,012

Adv: Kate Halahan

Base: Richmond

Benefit: Richmond

Amount recommended: £136,300

Purpose of grant request: The Bright Futures service will empower young people with disabilities/complex needs by giving them the information and support they need to transition smoothly into adulthood.

The Applicant

Ruils is a local user-led charity run by, and for, disabled people in Richmond. Its mission is to support adults and children with disabilities, including long-term health and mental health conditions, to live the life of their choice, be part of their community and reach their full potential. Originally called 'Richmond Users Independent Living Scheme', it was founded in 1999 to provide direct payment support. In line with local need, it soon expanded its services to provide a wide range of disability specific information and advice, advocacy, care planning support, social activities and befriending for disabled children and adults, and their families. It registered as a charity in 2003 and incorporated as a charitable company in 2009. As a Deaf and Disabled Peoples Organisation (DDPO), over 75% of its Trustees are disabled. It aims for 50% of staff to be disabled and requires all its children's services teams to have lived experience of being a parent of a disabled child.

Background and detail of proposal

This application is for a 3-year grant for Ruils to set up and deliver Bright Futures, a much-needed information, advice, planning and support service for disabled young people in Year 9 and above, and their families, to help them transition into adulthood.

Leaving school and transitioning into adult services is a critical stage in a disabled young person's life. Without the right support early on they are at high risk of ending up in the wrong setting, unsuitable education/training placements or dropping out completely. By the age of 26, disabled people are 4 times more likely to be NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) than non-disabled people (Papworth Trust, 2018). The Transitions team within London Borough of Richmond's children's services is over-stretched and only able to provide the infrastructure around the transition process, rather than direct support. For example, a social worker will not be able to make a recommendation to a disabled young person or parent for a local college, club or training opportunity. As a result, Ruils receives a high level of demand for transition support through its three existing children's services (befriending, family support and SEN advice for school ages), with over 40 clients a year saying they cannot access the information and support they need to plan for education/social/healthcare transitions. It receives referrals from the council and provides ad hoc advice to 'Post-16 Maze', a transition support group of around 35 local parents. Staff at Richmond's special schools and charities believe a transition

support service is desperately needed by over 80 young people/families annually. The Bright Futures service was therefore developed over the last couple of years, in consultation with the above groups, to fill this gap in essential support.

Bright Futures will be delivered by a dedicated Transition Advisor who will work directly with 120 young people in Year 9 and above, each year, to empower them to think about their aspirations, understand their options and set a plan for their future. The Advisor will also work with parents who, due to their children's disability or complex needs, may make many if not all of the transition decisions. Through a series of workshops across the academic year, young people/their families will be supported to create a Person-Centred Plan identifying their aspirations for the future and steps to get there; plan the skills they need to develop to enable a fulfilling, independent adult life (academic, social or practical skills); and research, evaluate and secure the most appropriate further education/training opportunities. The service will also support young people/their families to understand the transition process and how to navigate it, to ensure a smooth transition into adult services, helping them to plan and secure the support they need. The workshops will include group sessions, to provide a space to share and socialise, as well as 1-1 for more individual support. The location of the workshops will be flexible depending on the needs of those attending, including Ruils' office space at the Disability Action & Advice Centre in Teddington, local special schools and community centres. The service can be adapted to some online delivery where necessary due to the impacts of COVID-19, as with the charity's other services. A hybrid of online options may be offered to parents regardless, in recognition of feedback that more recent online sessions have made it easier for some to attend who may struggle to usually. Ruils will also develop an online knowledge base on its website, as a much needed one-stop place for young people and parents to find essential information on the transition process, such as when to start preparing, what to consider and options available (education, training, apprenticeships, social and healthcare).

As a new service, Ruils requests funding for the set-up, delivery and evaluation of the first 3 years of Bright Futures. As the service develops, it will look to apply to the Trust for continuation funding, as well as identifying wider funding sources to continue long-term delivery.

Financial Information

Ruils has grown steadily year-on-year, securing a balanced range of income from statutory contracts, notable grant-giving bodies, community fundraising and client contributions, such as towards befriending and counselling sessions. It has grown substantially this year (nearly 70% increase in turnover) after being awarded a 3-year Social Prescribing contract by Richmond General Practice Alliance (NHS Richmond). This has involved obtaining 15 new staff in the first year (almost double previous numbers), with additional challenges around onboarding remotely. However, the transition appears to have been smooth and the programme is progressing well, showing there is strong management in place to lead the charity through this period of change. The contract is due to end in October 2023, after which Ruils is confident in renewing it for a further two years. With the recent increase in unrestricted expenditure, the charity is falling short of its reserves policy to hold the equivalent of 3 months running costs but it is focused on strengthening this position, already securing 83% of income for 2021/22. The provision of Ruils' office space at

the Disability Action & Advice Centre is a gift in kind from the London Borough of Richmond, amounting to an approximate value of £20,000 per annum.

Year end as at 31st March	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
	Signed Accounts	Forecast	Budget
	£	£	£
Income & expenditure:			
Income	675,402	1,140,736	1,155,499
- % of Income confirmed as at February 2021	N/A	100%	83%
Expenditure	(644,972)	(1,127,723)	(1,143,224)
Total surplus/(deficit)	30,430	13,013	12,275
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	21,126	181	68
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	9,303	12,831	12,207
	30,430	13,012	12,275
Cost of Raising Funds	6,016	1,950	550
% Income	1%	0%	0%
Operating Expenditure (unrestricted)	437,722	734,709	871,146
Free unrestricted reserves:			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	103,680	116,511	128,718
No of months of operating expenditure	2.8	1.9	1.8
Reserves policy target	109,431	183,677	217,787
No of months of operating expenditure	3.0	3.0	3.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	(5,751)	(67,166)	(89,069)

Funding History

None.

Recommendation

Ruils is a well-managed organisation, with the expertise, lived experience and trusted local relationships to deliver an essential, high-quality, and impactful transition support service for disabled young people and their families in Richmond. The application clearly meets the outcomes of the Positive Transitions strand, under the priority area to provide specialist support services for disabled young people transitioning into adulthood. The recommendation is slightly less than the revised request as additional support costs were reduced to be comply with the Trust's funding policies for Bridging Divides. Funding is recommended as follows:

£136,300 over 3 years (£46,400; £44,400; £45,500) towards the salary of a part-time Transition Worker (28hpw), staff costs for management and administration (14hpw) and other associated costs to deliver Bright Futures in Richmond.

Approved.....
Chief Grants Officer /
Deputy CGO

Approved.....
Chair

Approved.....
Deputy Chair

Date.....

Date.....

Date.....